

Budgeting Basics: *How to Create and Stick to a Personal Budget*

Creating a personal budget is the cornerstone of financial success. It empowers you to track your income, expenses, and savings goals, ensuring you're in control of your finances.

Here are a few steps that you can take to help you create and stick to a budget:



Start Simple: Track Your Monthly Expenses

Keep track of all of your expenses for a month. Record everything you spend money on, from rent and groceries to dining out and entertainment. This process helps you understand where your money is going and can help identify areas where you can cut back on your spending.

Calculate Your Monthly Income

Next, determine your monthly income. Include all sources of income, such as wages, freelance earnings, and passive income. Knowing how much money you have coming in allows you to allocate it effectively.

Categorize Your Spending

Once you have a clear picture of your income and expenses, categorize your spending into fixed expenses (rent and utilities) and variable expenses (groceries and entertainment). Allocate a specific amount to each category based on your priorities and financial goals. You could also have fixed or variable expenses that do not impact your budget on a monthly basis, such as your homeowners' or car insurance premium, or an annual subscription or membership fee.

Track Your Progress

Use budgeting tools or apps to streamline the process and track your progress. Many apps categorize your spending automatically and provide insights into your financial habits, making it easier to stay on track.



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Find New Ways to Save

You can also save on regular or unexpected expenses by taking advantage of the benefits included with your F&M Extreme & F&M Premier checking accounts. Your account provides access to a complete suite of identity protection, including comprehensive monitoring services to help you spot and stop fraud early. You also have access to mobile phone protection through your F&M Extreme & F&M Premier checking account, which can help offset expenses incurred if your cell phone is damaged, lost or stolen.

Stay Flexible: Review and Adjust Your Budget

Regularly review and adjust your budget as needed. Life changes, such as a job change, moving, or unexpected expenses, may require revisions to your budget. Flexibility is key to long-term budgeting success.

Sticking to a budget isn't always easy! Remember to cultivate discipline and consistency. You can stick to your budget by avoiding impulse purchases, prioritizing needs over wants, and staying committed to your financial goals. Remember, every dollar you save brings you closer to financial freedom.

Looking for ways that you can save even more? We're only a click, tap, or phone call away. Reach out today – we are here to provide you with personalized guidance and can help find the financial products and services that meet your needs.

**Learn more by contacting a
Client Service Representative Team Member!**